

At Jesus' Feet.

At Jesus' feet I take my place:
I touch his garment's hem:
A helpless child in need of grace
My Lord will not condemn.
I have no hope but in his love;
His promise is my plea:
I give myself to him who strove
E'en unto death for me.
I only ask that I may know
What he would have me do,
That my obedient life may show
The grace that bears me through.
I've nothing, Lord, to offer thee
But this weak heart of mine:
O take it, Lord, and let it be
Thine own, forever thine.

The Source of True Wisdom.

BY D. BAILEY.

When I wished to investigate this subject, I naturally cast my eye to the opposite side of the page, to see the golden text of the lesson, which is, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." James 1:5.

It seems to me that this is answer enough to the question, for I read in connection with this lesson that a certain deaf man on being asked how it happened that he had such an accurate knowledge of the occurrences in his neighborhood, said that people did not waste their breath talking nonsense to him through a speaking trumpet, meaning by this that idle gossip would not reach him, and he had nothing but solid facts.

Notwithstanding these things I suppose that it was expected that I would make some remarks besides quoting the golden text, and as our lesson is a review I think it is eminently proper that we should look back over the life of Solomon and see how he received wisdom. We find that he felt the need of wisdom while he was yet young and that he "asked of God" and received it in such measure as had never been bestowed on man before; in fact, God said unto him, "There was none like unto thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee," and it was so. But afterward he felt the need of greater wisdom, and did he ask of God? No. He tried every device that Satan could suggest, rather. He read and wrote books, he connected himself with the courts of all the great nations of the world by marriage and communed with their wise men; he tried wine to sharpen his intellectual powers and give him pleasure, and he tried all kinds of expedients, but at the last he said: "I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

* * I communed with mine own heart, saying, 'Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem? Yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge. And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.'

Such was Solomon's worldly wisdom, but there is a wisdom, the one that begins with the fear of the Lord and is increased as our virtues increase, the value of which passeth the knowledge of the worldly-minded man, and through which a man may gain a foretaste of the joy, the rapture, the perfect ecstasy of the future life of the soul, redeemed and glorified.

Bayard Taylor died just six years ago and at the time I seized my pen to record the thoughts that seemed to burn within me as I thought of the name he had carved for himself in the world's entablature. Truly no man better than Taylor realized what a wearisome task it was to gather wisdom. He studied the foreign languages in their native haunts, with his knapsack on his back, trudging his way from place to place in strange countries. But, alas! how truly does he say in his "Picture of St John":

"Two spirits dwell in us; one chaste and pale,
A still recluse, whose garments know no stain,
Whose patient lips are closed upon her pain:

The other bounding to her cymbal's clang,
A bold bacchante, panting with the race
Of joy, the triumph and the swift embrace,

And gathering in one cup the grapes that hang
From every vine of youth: around her head
The royal roses bare their hearts of red;
Music is on her lips, and from her face
Fierce freedom shines and wild, alluring grace!"

Scarcely had I begun my task when I chanced to notice in a newspaper that it was thought that Taylor's death was brought about by using too much beer. The spell was broken. I actually shed tears over my broken idol. I laid aside my pen and it was six months before I had the heart to finish the sad story. I have since learned the secret, he experimented with the milder stimulants until he could not work without them and then, as by the force of circumstances, he was compelled to work, he continued to indulge.

While yet young he wrote: "The truth is not known except to the wise who drink it from the foaming coffee-cup. God has deprived fools of coffee, who, with invincible obstinacy, condemn it as injurious." Of tobacco, beer and wine he writes in the same strain. I fear he did not "ask of God" for in his last book he wrote:

"My limbs are weary, now the hoping heart
No more can lift their burden and its own.
The long, long strife is over; and the world,
Half driven and half persuaded to accept,
Seems languidly content."

But I had forgotten what I said at first about the use of many words, and have detained you too long, waiting for the application. Young man do you wish for wealth, wisdom or honor? Remember Solomon, and all his glory and all his trouble and "ask of God." "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matth. 6:33.)

Young woman, do you seek happiness, love and peace? "Ask of God." Harken to the "pale chaste maiden" in your heart rather than to the roguish, bold-eyed siren who will certainly deceive you. There is little danger that the pale, quiet maiden will gain too much control over you, for her bold, wanton rival is ever at her side to lead you in the opposite direction and you must look to God for help even after your best endeavor or you will find yourself dropping out by the wayside.

Young people are prone to feel that it is making a great sacrifice for them to surrender their sweet will for Christ's sake; they forget that the sacrifice is all on the other side, that the Lord gave up his home in heaven with all its indescribable glory for the sake of such sinners as we, but his forbearance is so great that he does not turn away when we spurn him, but, though he has waited long, is "waiting still." Oh, that I had the eloquence to stir the deepest recesses of the hearts of all those now in divine presence, that they might turn to or cling closer to the Savior's wounded side, that they may receive from him absolution and the "peace that passeth all understanding."

Give Me Something Better.

Many years ago, says Dr. W. Lawson, while I was pastor at Brooklyn, I took a seat in the cars one morning for Boston, by the side of Professor Hackett. I always felt that such a position was a providential privilege to be improved. Soon, therefore, I drew my learned friend into conversation, by mentioning a skeptical work I had lately read, remarking that some of the infidel objections in the work were new to me, and seemed very strong.

"Strong, strong?" said he, in his nervous way. "I see stronger difficulties than any which infidelity ever presented; but give me something better than Christianity to stand on, and I'll step off. Till something better is presented, I stand, and shall stand, where I am."

The remark, like many another from the good professor's lips, has abode with me and done me good. When some new skeptic comes forward to try his hand at demolishing Christianity, I ask, "Can you offer anything firmer and better? If not, spare your pains and leave the believer the one standing-place to which he clings, and on which millions are reposing. Amid the troubled sea of life there floats this one refuge. If you know a stronger and safer one, do, for humanity's sake, point it out, and guide me and struggling souls everywhere to its rest."—SE.

What a man sees only in his best moments as truth is truth in all its moments.

Fixed Upon the Rock.

BY ALVIN A. COBER.

In passing over hills and mountains you doubtless have noticed large rocks extending above the surface. There was, apparently, no soil upon them. They appeared altogether bare, as if containing only the molecules of which they are composed. But, strange to say, you sometimes see large trees upon them, growing, blooming, and bearing fruit as if they had been planted in the richest soil. We are made to wonder how this is. How can it grow upon the rock? Why does it not lay low at the raging of the storm? Many others of apparently better soil, situated in the valley, and shielded from the storms by hills, are seen to recline before even the tree upon the rock not sheltered from the storm nor fed by the soil of the meadow, but exposed to every wind that blows. If you observe carefully the foundation of such a tree you will notice rootlets extending to different parts of the rock, and large roots extending over the edges and down the sides into the earth whence it receives its nourishment. Thus, "like one familiar with hardships and adversities," it grows and lives. When the proud oak of the valley yields to the storm, it stands triumphant on the battle ground of the elements, waving its green banner as if rejoicing over the victory.

All this is wonderful, but more wonderful than this is it, however, to see where the grace of God lives and thrives. Tender exotic plant! Brought from some more genial clime, and might suppose it would perish amid the frigidity of this world, but not so. Behold, a Daniel is bred, but in no pious home in Israel. He grows in purity and saintship amid the effeminacy of a heathen nation. All are to bow in reverence to Darius the king, and that vast kingdom worship him,—all but one. Why not he? He prefers the God of hosts. "His window being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did afore time." Upon seeing this the conspirators prevailed upon the king to have this young Daniel cast into the lion's den. He is cast in, but the jaws of the lions are stayed. Why? Because he had rooted upon the Rock—the rock of ages. The roots reached over the edges and along the sides of this rock into heaven, and all the storms of hell and the attacks of satan could not slay him. Oh, he was so thoroughly wedded to this rock that neither power nor principality, neither death nor hell could ever come him.

Paul, the character for our consideration to-day, upon whom we cannot but look with wonder and admiration, whose character is indeed grand in the extreme, was once a persecutor, then a preacher; once a stumbling-block then a martyr; once "no pharisee so proud then no publican so humble." He had built upon the rock—Jesus Christ. The Jews tried to destroy both Paul and the Rock, and the Romans attempted to storm him from it; but he had firmly rooted upon it. That light that shone upon him while on his way to Damascus made such an impression upon him that he afterward knew not much else "save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

Many a person with better privileges and opportunities than Daniel or Paul had, have fallen by the wayside. Surrounded by favorable circumstances, they were laid low by the winds of temptation and the storms of trouble, when others with poorer facilities to serve God have stood firm to the end.

Flowers, leaves, and fruit are the airwoven children of light.

Our to-days and yesterdays are the blocks with which we build.

Shun every act that can be judged unworthy of commendation.

The weak sinews become strong by their conflict with difficulties.

The rose and the thorn, sorrow and gladness, are linked together.

There is no benefit so small that a good man will not magnify it.

All truths are not to be uttered; still it is always good to hear them.

Sin and misery are not lovers, but they walk hand in hand just as if they were.

Value the friendship of him who stands by you in the storm.

Mistake, error, is the discipline through which we advance.